




African  
Development  
Solutions

# 「TWENTY YEARS IN CLOSE-UP

Impact Report





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- Adeso is an African development and humanitarian organization that is changing the way people think about and deliver aid in Africa. And we have been doing so for more than 20 years.







## Where we started in 1991

# An incredible journey that grew from very humble roots

This organization has grown in the most remarkable of ways. Over 20 years ago, we were working in one town, in Badhan, Somalia. Now we're working with communities in three African countries – Somalia, Kenya and South Sudan.

I founded Adeso, then Horn of Africa Relief and Development Organization, in 1991 when I was living in Connecticut, USA. I was devastated by what was happening to the country of my birth, Somalia – what was happening to its people, its women and youth, and its environment.

I have lived in many countries over the years. Yet my beginnings among a pastoralist family in Somalia form my most powerful memories. We were nomads and each year, we moved from the Las Qoray beach over the mountains to a plateau near Erigavo. As a young girl, I herded baby goats and sheep, and slept on top of camels.

Later, as an adult, I returned to Somalia and revisited these same lands. I took to walking again, this time with other pastoralist families. I walked to the Horn of Africa's tip, climbed the Frankincense mountains and hiked through the desert and dunes.

Pastoralism has a very special relationship with the environment. By intimately studying the land, I could better understand its people. And yet I saw degradation everywhere, and pastoralists suffering because of it. Climate change, drought and the charcoal trade are just some of the obstacles. The need to create change drove

much of the work I have done, and led me to found this organization.

As civil war endured, the environment continued to be damaged, and social services to Somalis abandoned. And so I worked harder and harder. This organization helped people develop leadership skills, focused on education for youth, and brought together communities to discuss peace and democracy. We grew, slowly by slowly, developing and strengthening our relationships with the communities on the ground.

We are a very different organization today than we were in 1991. We were known as Horn Relief for a long time. We are now Adeso, a word derived from the phrase African Development Solutions. We touch countless more lives – more women and youth, more pastoralists, and now returnees in South Sudan and pastoral drop-outs in Kenya.

At the same time, we carry with us a kernel of those humble roots. With each community we reach, Adeso works to cultivate an intimate relationship as if we were still a one-community organization – a deep partnership leads to lasting solutions.



Adeso Founder, **Fatima Jibrell**





## Where we are headed

# Working towards an Africa that is not dependent on aid, but on the resourcefulness of its people.

We have undergone a lot of change in the last few years. We are now working with more communities and households than ever before.

What started as a small non-governmental organization (NGO) has grown to become an International NGO working in three countries, including South Sudan where we started our programming work in 2011. This was our first move to the greater Horn of Africa and came shortly after we established programs in Kenya in 2010. Our presence in Somalia has shifted too. In 2011, we quickly mobilized an emergency response in the country's South, the epicentre of the recent devastating famine.

While our recent expansion means looking forward, I also hope this report allows us to reflect back on Adeso's lifespan and arc. I joined Adeso in 2003, and moved into the role of Executive Director in 2006.

It has been an incredible 10 years, full of milestones and successes. Youth, women and the environment – some of our most compelling priorities – remained the focus of many of our programs. Whether educating pastoral youth and pushing the agenda on nomadic education, or helping women acquire job-related skills and training, we have helped better their lives.

Sometimes our goals and the aspirations of our partner communities call for new ideas. In 2003, we launched the largest unconditional cash transfer seen to date in Somalia, and emerged as leaders in a new field. We are committed to innovation and flexibility – something that will define us in the years ahead.

The quality of our programs has driven our expansion, and our staff continue to deliver results in demanding environments. We go where we are needed, and develop solutions that can help communities immediately, while also providing long-lasting change. Our name too has moved on. We work outside the 'Horn of Africa', and not just in 'relief'. And so Adeso, our new name, was born.

As always, we remain committed to improving livelihoods and enabling communities to stand on their own feet. So while we launch this new chapter as Adeso, we will continue working with the same aim: to achieve an Africa not dependent on aid but on the resourcefulness of its people.



Executive Director, **Degan Ali**

## About Adeso

# The challenges Adeso encounters are not unique. The way we work is.

We do not develop our programs in isolation, many miles away from the people we help. We instead work with communities to co-create programs that are appropriate for them and the environment in which they live.

This means working, living and sometimes even traveling with local communities to gain a deeper understanding of their lives – how they live, the challenges they face, the values they hold true. It is only once we understand the dynamics of a local community and the problems or potential of their environment that we develop and implement our programs.

It is this way of working that has enabled us to create sustainable solutions to some of the most pressing problems faced by the communities we serve. At the same time, we maintain the trust of our partners by respecting the things that make them special – like the natural environment and their sense of community.

### How our work has helped.

The work we do falls broadly into four different areas. Though these program areas are distinct, our belief that the natural environment and its

protection is integral to a thriving community informs everything we have done and continue to do:

- We have equipped people with **skills for life and work** – our education and skills training have given people, particularly women and pastoral youth, the skills they need to live useful, productive and self-sufficient lives.
- We have helped **reinvigorate local economies** – our work to support people's livelihoods and put in place infrastructure has helped strengthen local economies and build people's resilience.
- We have provided **humanitarian aid** – when people's needs have been urgent, we have delivered responsive and efficient humanitarian aid.
- We have **influenced policy** – we've ensured that the interests and voices of African communities are heard and considered at the highest levels.





Our unique approach to developing  
skills for life and work

**To increase skills and  
knowledge in local  
communities, we  
must first understand  
what's needed**

Helping young people and adults develop the skills they need to lead more productive, peaceful, and self-sufficient lives has been at the core of Adeso's work over the last 20 years. Whether by boosting literacy and numeracy among adults, or helping students to transition to formal schools, our work equips people with the skills they need to become self-sufficient.

Like much of Adeso's work, the way we develop our skills and training programs is quite distinctive. We don't make assumptions about the skills people need. We instead work with them to understand the life they live and what additional skills or training would be beneficial to them. It is as much a learning exercise for Adeso as it is for the communities we work with.

### **Pastoral Youth Leadership: developing leadership skills for the future**

Years of military rule and civil war left the Somali people with little foundation, institutions, or knowledge on which to build a political culture and system of governance rooted in democratic principles. During the same period, lack of a central government or social services meant a generation of youth had few educational opportunities.

Pastoral youth represent the largest number of children in Somalia and without access to education they became powerless, marginalized, and invisible.

In the late 1990s, Adeso started work to build the foundations for peace and sustainable development in Somalia, beginning with its young people. We focused on skills that

were relevant to their pastoral lives, including animal health and husbandry. But we also began educating and training pastoral youth in leadership skills that value democratic governance, human rights, social justice, and protection of the environment – the key components of any just, peaceful society.

This work evolved into our unique education program: the Pastoral Youth Leadership (PYL) program. The PYL program was based on the belief that bottom-up development at the community level is crucial to overall economic recovery. It was also designed to empower the youth of Somalia, including young women, to create a future based on peace and sustainable development.

Today, many of our PYL graduates have gone on to play leading roles in community-driven initiatives that address local challenges, including emergency situations. The knowledge they gained is now helping to develop the Somali society of the future – one built on the values of democracy, human rights and environmental protection that they learned in the PYL classroom.

# 2,000+

young people have benefited from the PYL education program – 80% of whom were girls.



> When you walk with people,  
eat with them, live with them,  
then you understand them.

Abdullahi "Sufi" Mohamed Hassan  
Deputy Project Manager, Somalia







Nomadic education

## Camel Caravan: reaching the unreachable.

# 150,000

nomadic people have been  
reached by Camel Caravans,  
and more than 150 students  
have been involved.





Nomadic communities are an important part of Somalia's history and its future. But they are also amongst the hardest people to reach and to help. Adeso is one of the very few development organizations that has been able to work with and gain the trust of these extraordinary communities.

We have been working to promote nomadic education in Somalia for 15 years. This began by helping pastoral children from different villages access education and creating a unique curriculum that suited their needs. While they learned math and history, they also learned about animal husbandry and the environment – subject matters that are relevant to their lives as pastoralists. Our founder, Fatima Jibrell, took the concept of nomadic education one step further and created the 'Camel Caravan' in 2001.

Camel Caravans now happen every year, or every few years. Adeso students travel with camels and tents for several weeks to visit nomadic settlements. They share their own new knowledge – about animal husbandry, animal and human health, peacemaking and natural resource management – with the nomadic communities. But they also collect information from the nomadic pastoralists, sometimes informally and other times through surveys. This data is extremely valuable because it comes from hard-to-reach communities and informs our future programs, as well as that of other organizations.

The Camel Caravan has benefits beyond the collection of data. In 2003, students returning from that year's Camel Caravan alerted Adeso

to the fact that many thousands of nomadic pastoralists were at risk of dying from hunger as a result of severe drought. Adeso quickly trucked in water and put in place several cash programs to address their immediate needs, saving the lives of thousands. In this instance, Camel Caravan was not just informative – it was lifesaving.

### **A GIRL'S STORY:**

➤ Ms. Amal Mohamed Duale

Following the death of her mother in 2004, Amal, like many girls who are orphaned, was forced to drop out of primary school to take care of her siblings. Her two elder sisters continued with school, but in the afternoons when they were at home, Amal was able to attend the Dhahar PYL Centre, where she started in 2005.

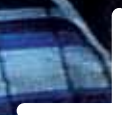
Here, Amal blossomed, and she developed a particular aptitude and passion for leadership and governance studies. Now, after graduating in 2009, Amal is chairlady of the Kulmiye Environment Protection Organization, where the skills she learned at the Dhahar PYL centre guide her work.

Amal also plays a key role in the continuation of PYL and Camel Caravan programs. She says: "The experience of participating in a Camel Caravan excursion, especially for me as a pastoralist, fills me with a special feeling. I enjoy the interaction between PYL learners from different clans, villages and districts. Together we lived and worked harmoniously without much fuss. A true reflection of the Somalia we all aspire to." ◀



Our work to reinvigorate local economies from the ground-up

**When a community's economy is strong, so are its people.**



Growing the local economy is the best way to help lift people out of poverty, permanently. A healthy economy creates jobs and leads to higher incomes. Our work over the last 20 years has focused on putting in place the infrastructure, skills and support needed to stimulate economic growth.

We also understand the importance of discussing the needs and constraints of local economies before designing programs. Sometimes people require skills, and our programs have been as simple – but as crucial – as teaching basic literacy and numeracy.

When it's not skills that people require, but support, Adeso has been able to assist in other ways. A big part of this means helping people to make the most of the land upon which they live. This has included giving communities access to seeds and tools, working to improve soil quality, and maintaining irrigation systems. We also rehabilitate key community infrastructure, like roads that link communities to main markets.

Cash based interventions have an important role to play in boosting local economies, particularly when paired with training and skills development. A cash grant can give someone the means to buy livestock and perhaps start a smallholding, which not only gives them an income but also becomes a useful local resource for the community. Or it can be used by a family to rebuild assets they may have lost or had to sell in an emergency. That way, they can start to reclaim the independence and self-sufficiency they had before crisis struck.

By working with people in these many different ways we have helped them increase their assets and production levels. In doing so, we're helping them lift themselves out of poverty and create strong, self-sufficient communities.

### **ZAHRA'S STORY:**

➤ from destitution to self-sufficiency

"I came to Hadaftimo in early 2006 as a destitute. Now I am a successful business woman who can keep my family in good shape with confidence," says Zahra Yusuf Gulled.

That she is now a successful entrepreneur running her own butchery business is due in part to the \$100 loan she received as part of an Adeso revolving fund project, along with training on how to run a business.

"From early 2007 until now, I have been able to feed my family with the profits generated by my butchery business and I saved 1,835,000 Somali Shillings (about \$1000). With those savings, I bought three pregnant dairy goats. Later, I managed to increase the goats from three to six and also got milk from my dairy goats to use for the household. After all of that, today I still have \$100 left in my savings, which I want to re-invest in my business.

"The success has changed my life significantly and now I am able to help poor and destitute households in my village. I have also been able to send two of my children to the school as I now have enough money to pay the school fees." 🐄





Building new skills and supporting  
entrepreneurship in Somalia

**The most important  
thing you can give  
someone is the  
means to help  
themselves**



In many areas of Somalia, natural and man-made shocks such as drought, conflict and rising food prices have had a severe impact on already vulnerable communities. Poor pastoral households are struggling to hold on to their livelihoods, while families have little food, resulting in high malnutrition.

Adeso has taken several steps towards addressing this problem. By providing extra tools and supporting the development of new skills such as bee-keeping and raising poultry, we have helped both pastoralists and farmers increase their livelihood options and create alternative ways of making money.

We have also helped communities to build the resilience they need by training community-based organisations in a range of new skills. These include entrepreneurial development, literacy and small-scale income-generating activities.

This kind of multi-pronged approach helps cushion poor households from future shocks. Women are better able to buy food and other basic needs, improving their children's health. Building new skills and strengthening livelihoods benefits poor families, but also builds the foundations for a stronger community too.

# 626km

of roads in Somalia were cleared in a 2008 project – improving access to markets and goods.

## FROM ONE SMALL SEED:

➤ Mrs. Hawa Abdullahi Warsame

Loaning people, particularly women, money to start small businesses ('seed money') is an important part of our work. One such recipient of this seed money was Mrs. Hawa Abdullahi Warsame, a member of the Al-Nasar Women's Group in Somalia.

Hawa was able to start her small business after receiving \$200 from Adeso in 2007. From the capital, she used \$100 to fix the roof of her house and the remaining \$100 to start her petty trade business.

Her shop is located along one of the dusty streets of Badhan. She has an average monthly profit of \$80 from selling non-food items, and her customer base is slowly but gradually growing.

Within 10 months, Hawa had repaid the full amount she had borrowed. This money was given to another member of Al Nasar Women's Group – passing along the opportunity to another entrepreneur.

Hawa says: "The cash and training I received from Adeso served as a stepping-stone in improving my livelihood and my ability to cope. Without this, my life and that of my family would be much worse than it is today". ◀

592,774

people have benefited from  
Adeso's cash transfer programs.



## Adeso's humanitarian work in Africa

# In an emergency situation, we are close at hand.

Like every NGO working in Africa, we are all too familiar with the acute challenges of humanitarian crises. While we always strive for long-term solutions, over the years we have found ourselves providing some emergency aid too. It made sense because we were already there. So if our partner communities were suffering a drought, we were well-positioned to organize water trucking or distribute cash grants so they could buy food.

Adeso pioneered the use of cash distribution in Somalia and it has become a defining part of our humanitarian and development work. When people think aid, they often think food, medicine or clothing. Yet cash offers several advantages over these more traditional means of helping people.

It is cost effective, often leads to a better use of resources, and has a positive effect on local economies. Significantly, it allows people in poverty to prioritize their own needs and choose the type of aid that would be of most benefit to them and their family. In this way, cash is a much more dignified and respectful form of aid – two things that we consider to be very important.

### ➤ Helping people secure food and livelihoods in Somalia

The Afmadow and Badhaade districts of Lower Juba are among Somalia's most desperate. Many

people here lack the purchasing power to meet their basic needs. They have few resources to rely upon, and little that can help them establish a livelihood or job.

What was needed was short-term support with a view to building long-term resilience. Our way of achieving this was through Cash Relief, a more immediate intervention, combined with Cash for Work (CfW) – paying people to work on local projects, bringing employment and much-needed infrastructure to local communities.

Our work had many positive impacts. Not only did it improve people's access to food, it also enabled people to pay off their debts. This opened new credit lines for beneficiaries, increased vulnerable pastoralists' income, reduced the need to sell prime livestock, and revived the traditional system of gift sharing.

Completion of micro-projects, especially water pans, brought many benefits to the communities as a whole. It drastically reduced the distance women travelled to fetch water for their daily needs, and reduced the occurrences of waterborne diseases. And better still, the expanded water pans filled with enough water during the long rains to provide the communities with enough water to last until the next rainy season – providing hope in a land where hope, like rain, is in short supply. ◀



## Our work in Kenya

# Hope amidst the hardship

While much of our work over the past 20 years has been in Somalia, we expanded into Kenya to address escalating humanitarian needs in the North East. There are two vulnerable populations in North Eastern Kenya – the refugees in Dadaab camp and the local population. We work with the host population, who face many of the same challenges as refugees, but don't necessarily have the same access to help.

Whether refugee or host, North Eastern Kenya is a tough place to live. The environment is harsh and drought prone with limited resources. Here, as with all our humanitarian work, our team on the ground assesses the scale of the problem and we plan our response to meet the urgent needs of vulnerable families.

Our work in Kenya is focused on the short-term needs of the local population, as well as the long-term needs that can help protect communities from future shocks. It includes Cash Relief, as well as Cash for Work projects to build water infrastructure like wells and water pans. This means what rain does fall is properly stored. We also help the communities learn about hygiene and sanitation, which helps people keep their families healthy.

Our work here has had many positive effects. More than 96,600 people boosted their income thanks to cash transfers, enabling them to secure food and recover assets. Our work to improve infrastructure and education around water and hygiene has seen a significant improvement in sanitation and a decrease in diarrhea and dysentery.

An interesting outcome of our work in Kenya has been the effect it has had on the female population. Many of the men in the villages had gone away with their livestock in search of pasture, which meant it was the women who took part in the Cash for Work activities. This had a number of positive repercussions: it gave them the opportunity to prove to the community they could engage in physical activities; it gave them the ability to purchase goods and services ("without asking the husband"); and it gained them respect for working and earning cash.

As an organization started by a woman, and one that continues to advocate for women's rights, these are outcomes that we are particularly proud of.



# 96,600

people are set to benefit  
from Adeso's cash transfer  
work in Kenya.

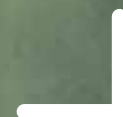






Our work to influence policy

**We're making sure  
African communities  
are seen and heard**



Adeso plays a key role in promoting better ways to deliver effective humanitarian and development aid. We also contribute meaningfully to policy discussions on issues of particular significance to African communities. Whether in Nairobi or Washington, we liaise with policy makers and humanitarian leaders in different forums, on different issues, and on a regular basis.

Our experience and expertise, gained over 20 years of working with African communities, has not only influenced policy and changed practices in Africa, but also informed and influenced the work of other organizations. This includes our substantial work with cash transfers, where we now lead a technical working group on the subject and train other humanitarian organizations on its use.

### **CHARCOAL BAN:**

➤ pushing for environmental change

Adeso's campaigning voice began with that of our founder, Fatima Jibrell, who has tackled many policy-level obstacles in her career – whether advocating for women's rights among Somali politicians or mobilizing resources to protect the country's fragile environment.

One of her most notable accomplishments was ending the charcoal trade in Northeast Somalia. Fatima united people and groups through a network she co-founded in 1996 –one that crossed Somalia's clans and regions. She tirelessly advocated for an end to the charcoal trade, which was destroying the region's acacia trees to make charcoal destined for the Middle East.

Through her advocacy and coordination, the Puntland Government prohibited the export of charcoal through the Bosaso Port in 2002. It was an incredible achievement, which eventually saw Fatima awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize, the world's largest prize honouring the work of grassroots environmentalists. ◀

### **WOMEN'S RIGHTS:**

➤ influencing policy at local level

One of the reasons Adeso was founded in 1991 was to address the plight of women and children in Somalia. It is an important part of who we have become: an organization that always targets the most vulnerable, regardless of clan, age or gender. And we have consistently pushed to empower women through our programs and activities.

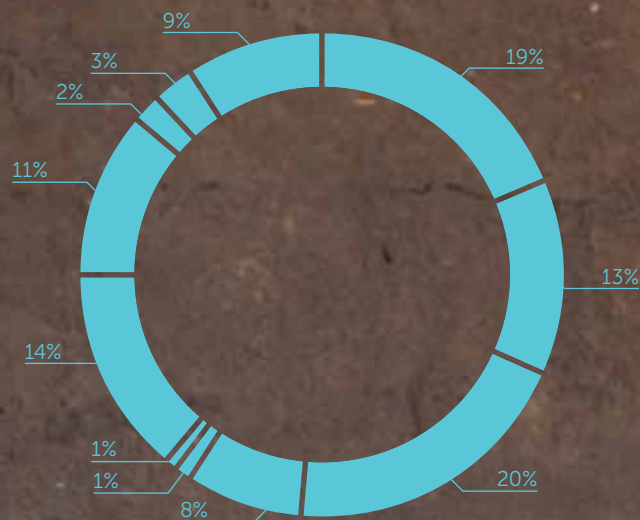
In 2003, Adeso worked with women's groups in Puntland to strengthen their voice and ensure greater political participation in Somalia. Adeso helped women read the constitution for the first time, and to identify gender gaps. These issues led to further dialogue with Puntland government officials and the empowerment of women to lobby for change.

Adeso also works with communities on the ground to target local issues affecting them. Through its work with nomadic youth in Somalia, Adeso was able to spread information about the dangers of Female Genital Mutilation. By empowering local youth with knowledge, they were able to help change attitudes and practices. In the town of Xingalool, it was estimated that 30-40% of young girls would not undergo FGM as a result of Adeso's work. ◀



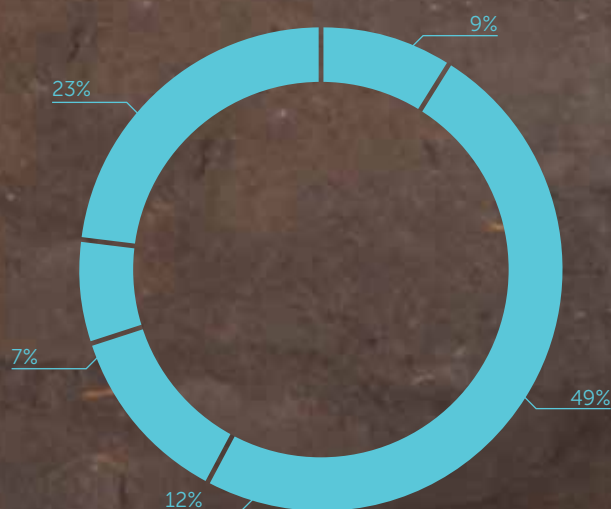
# How our work is funded

## Where our funds come from



19% Oxfam – Novib, Canada, GB  
13% European Commission  
20% USAID  
8% Government of the Netherlands  
1% DFID  
1% CIDA  
14% UN Agencies  
11% SIDA  
2% SDC  
3% Other International INGOs  
9% Others (Diaspora, Personal contribution etc.)

## Where our funding is spent



9% Education  
49% Emergency  
12% Water & Sanitation  
7% Natural Resource Management  
23% Food Security & Livelihoods

\*This data is for the period 2002 through to the first quarter of 2012.






**Our work is only made possible thanks  
to the generosity of our donors:**

CIDA  
DfID  
ECHO  
European Commission  
Global Fund for Children  
Global Fund for Women  
Global Green Grants Fund  
Government of France  
Government of the Netherlands  
NED – National Endowment  
for Democracy  
OCHA  
OFDA  
Oxfam Canada  
Oxfam GB  
Oxfam Novib  
SDC  
SIDA  
UNICEF  
USAID

Adeso is a registered non-profit in Kenya, a registered 501(c)3 non-profit organization in the USA, and a registered charity in England & Wales (no. 1131711).



In the last two years, we have expanded our programming from Somalia to Kenya and South Sudan. We have also returned to Somalia to assist with the famine response. Our work is needed more than ever, and in more places than ever. So too are funds.

Any funds donated to Adeso will support our work across our four program areas in these three African countries and help improve the lives of many thousands of people. We would love to talk to you about how you may be able to help us.

## Want more information?

- Follow us on Twitter [@Adesoafrika](#)
- Find us on Facebook [facebook.com/adesoafrika](#)
- Check out our website [adesoafrika.org](#)

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